

Causes and Consequences for Russia of the First World War

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Abstract. The article discusses the causes and consequences of the First World War for Russia. An unprecedented war has refuted the forecasts of politicians and the military regarding its short-term nature and demanded the mobilization of all the country's internal forces for its implementation. The province provided the army with the necessary human, food, material and technical resources in the face of the growing economic crisis caused by the war. Particular attention is paid to the recognition by the authorities of the need to mobilize the economy for military needs, which was facilitated by the province. His industrial enterprises were engaged in the production of weapons, handicraft production complied with the instructions of the Commissariat for the manufacture of clothing, shoes, equipment. Charity, which has a long tradition in Russia, has become an important component of public life during the war. A feature of the charity of the war was the wide participation of the masses in it, as well as the birth of new charitable societies to help the victims of the war.

1. Introduction

World War I 1914-1918 became a qualitatively new phenomenon in the history of mankind. For the first time, it was not individual countries and regions, but the entire world community, that were at war. The war was the most tragic in its consequences for Russia, in which a radical breakdown of the entire system of social relations took place unprecedented in history. A number of ideological reasons contributed to the unilateral and biased coverage and even oblivion in our country of the events of the First World War. Only the last decade of the 20th century was marked by increased attention of domestic researchers to the history of the First World War. The increased desire of researchers to reconstruct and rethink the events of the "unknown" war, which immediately preceded the revolutionary upheavals of 1917, is largely due to the emerging possibility of an objective comprehensive study of this period [1].

Many problems, in particular, the problem of superhigh and low incomes, relations of power and the opposition, trust of the authorities, selection of personnel of the state apparatus and the army, and others that were not solved at the beginning and during the First World War and ultimately destroyed the Russian Empire, are relevant and present time. This circumstance increases the demand for research, which can be useful for developing concepts for the further development of the country, and for the prevention of possible social upheavals [2].

The relevance of the study is also due to the fact that the regional aspect in historiography is presented fragmentarily. Meanwhile, the revival of the Russian province based on historical experience is one of the conditions for the country's recovery in the next transitional period of its history. [3].

2. Methodology

The theoretical and methodological basis of the work is, first of all, the principles of historicism and objectivity. They suggest an unbiased approach to the analysis of the problems studied, a critical attitude to the sources, making judgments on the basis of comprehension of the totality of facts, as well as considering events in a causal relationship and in the context of the historical situation. To identify the dynamics of the studied processes and their consequences, the problem-chronological principle of material structuring was used [4]. The comparative historical method made it possible to trace the interconnection of events. In addition, the work uses sociocultural, systemic, retrospective, quantitative methods of historical research, as well as the methods and concepts of statistics, sociology, political science, military history [5].

3. Discussion

In the 1920s, a significant number of military-historical works on the World War appeared, written by former Russian generals. Significant, of course, are the works of A.M. Zayonchkovskogo. Despite the use of revolutionary phraseology, the works of A.M. The Zayonchkovskys were deprived of ideological implications, which distinguishes them from later Soviet studies of the First World War. This author drew a wide range of sources that contain information about the views of senior Russian military on foreign policy issues, about their ideas about the future war. Of particular value for these works is the fact that their author, quoting archival documents, sought to give the floor to the participants in the events he describes [6]. However, the author did not manage to avoid some subjective and not always justified assessments and characteristics of military and state figures of the Russian Empire. But, despite this, it should be noted that in the works of A.M. Zayonchkovsky until 1976 remained the most comprehensive study of the First World War in Soviet historiography [7].

The military art of war is considered in Novitsky's two-volume study, reprinted on the eve of World War II. However, the author's attention is focused on events on the Western Front [8].

The work of General Manikovsky, finalized by E.Z. Barsukov is devoted to a narrow problem - the combat supply of the Russian army. However, this material reveals the failure of pre-war beliefs. The statistics cited are striking in the difference between the alleged Russian military elite and the real scale of the war. At the same time, this work is aimed at justifying the Main Artillery Directorate (GAU), the head of which was its author, the author proposes to lay the blame for the errors on the General Staff. [8]. The theme of World War I was also reflected in emigre historiography. We should mention the work of Kersnovsky, two volumes of which are devoted to the period under study. However, this work neither in style nor in the degree of reliability of the actual material (referred to in the notes compiled by S. G. Nelippovich) can not be considered fully scientific. According to its author, the 18th century was, no less, the golden age of mankind, and with the introduction of universal military service, the decline of military art began. As you can see, the decline of Russia's military power in the second half of the XIX - early XX centuries. seen as a decline in military affairs in general. This work contains another completely false thesis, which, oddly enough, was later adopted by Soviet military historiography - on the confrontation of the national and German schools in Russian military art [9].

To date, military art in World War I and the military-theoretical thought of Russia at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries, the structure and activities of the highest military bodies of the Russian Empire, the personnel of the high command of the armed forces, the sociocultural appearance of Russian generals have been thoroughly studied, there are some works about the system of views and perceptions of the military elite [10].

4. Results

The First World War was, according to some far-sighted reasonings of its contemporaries, a turning point in the history of mankind. The search for the origins of World War I recently led historians to such a seemingly unconvincing conclusion that the war arose not because of the political struggle of the opposing blocs and not even because of the military rivalry of the great powers: the causes of

peace turned out to be much deeper than someone's ambitions, claims, grievances and erroneous calculations [11].

The feeling of impending catastrophe, its inevitability was characteristic of the best representatives of the European and Russian intellectual elite at the turn of the XIX-XX centuries. A premonition of a change in historical eras was also expressed in the works of religious philosophers, whom we have been considering since the 1900s. Such sentiments became more pronounced after the revolution of 1905-1907. They were expressed, in particular, in collections of articles "Milestones" (1909) and "Intelligentsia in Russia" (1910). By the beginning of World War I, some issues (the formation of neo-Slavophilism, the discussion of the problems of nationalism and messianism, the formation of the theory of "liberal imperialism") had already been posed, although they were far from exhausted. The beginning of the war gave a new impetus to the discussion of these problems and partially transferred them from the sphere of theoretical constructions to the field of practical solution. [12]. [13].

During the First World War, a qualitatively new stage began in relations between the government and the bourgeoisie: the latter claimed equal rights with it in deciding the fate of the domestic economy and the first role in determining the course for the development of productive forces. According to Ananich, the grandiose program of state transformations developed in 1916, set out in a memorandum to the government by the leaders of the Russian bourgeoisie, "if adopted, determined the general direction of Russia's economic and social development in the post-war period," and not just the country's exit from the crisis. One way or another, "cultural capitalism" in Russia, under any options, would develop with a significant, if not decisive role of the state principle, which fully corresponds to the socio-economic traditions of the country and the history of its entrepreneurial class. This conclusion has a very relevant sound in modern conditions, when the state seeks to purposefully influence the formation of a civilized private business in Russia [14].

One of the most important issues around which the main discussions are held is war and revolution, their interconnection and mutual influence. A related issue is the prospects for the democratic transformation of the Russian Empire at the beginning of the 20th century. So, V.Yu. Chernyaev believes that the war made a revolution inevitable and brought Russia onto the path of democratic reform. Ultimately, he argues, "as a result of World War I, instead of the flourishing of democracy, Russia came to its complete opposite - the totalitarian system." (70) This conclusion is disputed by other scholars (see the next chapter, L. Hymeson and others). Alekseeva IV, for example, believes that many factors made the war and revolution inevitable, and one of them was Russia's unpreparedness for war, as well as its inept leadership. It should be agreed that it is impossible to directly derive the totalitarian regime that developed in the late 1920s and early 1930s from the events of 1917-1918, when there were only some of its elements. Moreover, it is hardly legitimate to talk about the true democratization of Russia during the war, as Chernyaev interprets from a liberal point of view [15]. Despite a certain development of democratic institutions and the participation of the population in resolving issues of the country's development, the framework of a liberal state of workers in 1917 did not suit [16].

5. Conclusion

Summing up, we can say that the predictive and, in many respects, even synchronous image of the world war in the minds of the military elite of the Russian Empire were not adequate to reality. Erroneous ideas gave rise to erroneous decisions, which, in turn, were one of the reasons for the unsuccessful course of the war for Russia.

Military failures confronted Russian society with the need for a radical replacement of the ruling elite, including the military. [17].

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